COLORING CARNATIONS

Observe how plants absorb water.

### Materials
- White carnations
- Scissors
- Water
- Food Coloring
- Three cups or vases

### Procedure
1. Cut the carnation stems in half, or short enough that they will stand up in your vase or cups.
2. Fill all the cups with water. Use several drops of food coloring to color two of the cups, and leave one clear. Place your carnations in the water.
3. Set your carnations aside and observe them carefully over the next few days.

### Results
The white petals of the carnations will start to change color, matching the colored water of the cup they are in.

### Why?
Plants usually absorb water from the ground through their roots, then move it through their stems and up into their leaves. Even without their roots, plants will still continue to draw water up into their stems. The water in this experiment is colored, so you can track the movement of the water through the plant visually. The white petals of the carnation show the color very clearly, since there is no other color present to conflict with the food coloring.

To learn more about botanical science, check out Lichterman Nature Center.